

**REGION**  
**PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN**  
**FY 2011-2015**

**ANNUAL UPDATE**

**March 28, 2013**  
***FINAL***

Plan Prepared by  
Region 6 Planning Commission

Adopted by Region 6 Policy Board

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## **Introduction**

The following constitutes the CY2013 annual update to the Region 6 2011-2015 Passenger Transportation Plan.

## **Process**

The 2013 Annual Update to the Region 6 Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) continues participation by community members from all four of the Region 6 counties. The PTP assesses current and future transit needs and identifies potential transit-related projects and activities. It also reviews data gathered over the preceding years.

The PTP 2013 Annual Update was researched and prepared by Region 6 Planning Commission staff. Information regarding transit inventories and transportation needs was assembled and documented by the Region 6 Planning Commission staff.

Region 6 Planning Commission and PeoplesRides staff are involved in county level passenger transportation discussions around the region. We participate in existing human service oriented groups. We routinely participate in the following groups:

- Poweshiek Senior Provider Alliance: This group meets every other month. All groups that serve seniors are represented. This includes medical providers, human service groups, transportation, and housing. With each meeting every agency has time to discuss activities, new initiatives, opportunities, needs, and challenges. Meeting dates attended – 8/25/12.
- Hardin County Transit Advisory Group: 7/19/12, 8/10/12, 8/15/12, and 10/3/12. This group includes churches, county, Ellsworth Hospital, cities, public health, and HVAAA. This group provides input and feedback on county transit initiatives.
- Tama Senior Provider Alliance: This group meets monthly. All groups that serve seniors are represented. With each meeting every agency has time to discuss activities, new initiatives, opportunities, needs, and challenges. Meeting dates attended – 5/2/12, 8/1/12, 9/24/12, and 12/5/12.
- Tama County Interagency: This is a roundtable group of all human service groups in the county. Meetings attended – 2/2/13, and 6/7/12.
- Poweshiek County Interagency: This is a roundtable group of all human service groups in the county. Meetings attended – 1/19/13, 8/16/12, 10/18/12.
- Marshall Senior Provider Alliance: This group meets monthly. All groups that serve seniors are represented. With each meeting every agency has time to discuss activities, new initiatives, opportunities, needs, and challenges. Meeting dates – 1/4/13, 2/7/13, 7/10/12, 9/11/12, and 11/6/12.
- Hardin County Circle of Life: This group meets monthly. All human service groups are represented. With each meeting every agency has time to discuss activities, new initiatives, opportunities, needs, and challenges. Meetings attended – 3/27/12, 5/22/12, 8/25/12, 9/25/12, 10/23/12, 11/27/12, and 12/18/12.
- Marshall County Commission on Aging: Region 6 Planning – PeoplesRides is a member of the board. This group meets monthly to discuss issues of importance to seniors.

Meetings attended – 1/9/13, 2/13/13, 3/12/12, 4/9/12, 5/15/12, 6/11/12, 7/9/12, 8/13/12, 9/10/12, 10/8/12, 11/12/12, and 12/10/12.

Public health agencies, nursing homes, medical clinics, hospitals, hospice, medical equipment providers, insurance companies, and human service agencies are also represented at the above county level meetings. All these groups represent the general public, disabled, and senior needs.

As part of the 12/31/12 Region 6 Planning Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy staff met with regional cities, counties, and the Sac & Fox Settlement. A variety of transportation, community issues, public transit, and other questions were raised during the interviews. The concerns at the meetings were about continuing current services and not increasing general public fares. No concerns were raised by the Sac & Fox Settlement. The settlement and other selected people also participated in the steering committee for this effort.

### **Needs/Issues identified and discussed in 2012**

The needs discussed in the above settings include-

- Need to continue current services;
- Need to at least continue current funding;
- Need for capital funds for vehicle replacements;
- Need for passenger transportation services to be discussed concurrently with planning other new service programs;
- Need for Iowa Care transportation within the region, to Des Moines, and Iowa City;
- Need a disabled day program in Poweshiek County since the Poweshiek day program for intellectually disabled clients closed 7/1/12 and transportation will be needed for the clients;
- Need for weekend transportation services occasionally; and
- Need to lower general public rates on routes to attract greater ridership.

### **New 2012 services to respond to meetings**

In FY 2012/2013 Region 6 Planning – Peoplerides has implemented several new programs in response to the needs coming from county level meetings. A short summary of those services and challenges are noted below.

- Iowa Cares Transportation: Rate is \$5/day for all services, Monday-Friday. We go anywhere within the region to Primary Health in Marshalltown on existing routes. Every Tuesday we go from the region to Broadlawns in Des Moines. Every Thursday we go from anywhere within the region to University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. This service is funded with an 80% State Special Projects grant. The other funding is from Region 6 Planning State/Federal operating funds. The service to Iowa City is currently operated every week. We have 2-3 people regularly going.
- Hardin County Pilot Route: The rate is \$5 day from anywhere in the county on Tuesdays. For the first half of the year we have only had 33 rides on 13 separate days. We have averaged about 2-3 riders per day when there is demand. The route starts at 8 am on Tuesdays and end at 2 pm back in Iowa Falls. We are using this as a pilot to see what is

possible. We had substantial marketing with door hangers, mailings, press releases, etc. The Hardin County Board of Supervisors is funding this new service. Since we started this service we only transport 4-5 people per month. It is not achieving the impact that we originally desired. We are unsure about the future plans.

- Alden Service Integration with Iowa Falls Demand Response: Schedule trips with our Iowa Falls driver to serve Alden which is about 6 miles West of Iowa Falls. The rate is \$5/day, Monday-Friday. Region 6 Planning applied for New Freedom funds for this expansion service. We have not had any demand for this service. No New Freedom funds have been requested. New Freedom funds will not be requested in FY 2014.
- Peoplerides Cares: Staff recognizes that some lower income passengers do not have sufficient incomes to support the cost of usually demand response medical trips. With Region 6 Planning Board approval we set aside some need based funding with a fairly simple intake application. The cost for rides under the program is \$5/day. The income limit of 30% of median for trips – self reported. The only eligible trips are medical related. Nursing homes and TMS rides are not eligible. Since we started this at 7/1/12 we have not had more than a hand full of applicants.

### **Recommendations for the upcoming year**

They key work items for the next calendar year include –

- Continue working with Hardin County pilot projects.
- Modify Tama County demand response services to respond to local transportation needs of disabled and seniors. Work with the Senior Providers Alliance and consult with Cities and the Counties to evaluate current services, needs, and funding resources.
- Continue to see the demand for the Peoplerides cares fund and make adjustments.
- Improve system wide marketing. Use door hangars, brochures, magnets, vinyl bus wraps, etc.
- Replace worn out transit equipment. The previous PTP documents had a very aggressive replacement schedule. Federal capital replacement funding will not likely be available to meet such a schedule.
- Install cameras and GPS equipment on busses.
- Try to find funding to extend hours in Iowa Falls and provide affordable rides during non-route times.
- Monitor and be involved in any efforts to reform mental health funding for counties.
- Monitor and be involved in the area agency on aging reorganization.
- Meet with MICA to discuss opportunities to get Headstart kids into centers in rural locations.
- Replace Marshalltown Municipal Transit (MMT) circa 50 year old fareboxes with new electronic fareboxes.
- At high usage MMT bus stops, have better seating options especially for disabled and seniors.

Region 6 Planning and MMT will do as many of the above projects as possible. The above provides the general transit planning work items for the upcoming year.

### **Has advisory group validated and prioritized these recommendations**

All the projects listed above have come out of our county level discussions over the last 6-8 months. We respond to their input and try to come up with solutions. It is a challenging time to come up with new funding sources, since many local funds are decreasing. The number one priority of each group is to continue current services. Replacing vehicles is a necessary part of continuing current services.

### **Status of FY 2012 Applications**

Peoplerides and Marshalltown Municipal Transit applied for State Transit Assistance and Section 5311 Federal Transit Operating Assistance. That funding was awarded like in the past.

Peoplerides requested FTA 5309 capital assistance to replace four vehicles in the FY 2013 funding application. These vehicles include #304, #204, #504, and #604. We currently understand that two of those vehicles are in the state FTA capital application - #504, and #604. Those vehicles will not likely be replaced until the last half of FY 2014. The federal funding for these two vehicles is \$126,160. Region 6 Planning will need to provide \$25,840 of matching funds.

Region 6 Planning requested State Transit Assistance Special Project funding at 80% to start an Iowa Cares Operating Assistance service. The 20% local match will be provided through FTA 5311 Operating funds.

Region 6 Planning requested \$1,800 of FTA New Freedom operating funds to start a transit service from Alden to Iowa Falls. The FTA funds will provide a 50% contribution. The other funds for this service will come from the City of Alden. It is currently doubtful that the federal funds will be used for this service. If demand surprises us in the last half of the year, we may change. We will not request funding to continue this service, because there is no demand.